

Docket No.: 5259-000071/US/NP  
(PATENT)

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re Patent Application of:  
Hideaki KIMATA et al.

Application No.: National Phase of  
PCT/JP2005/014945

Confirmation No.: N/A

Filed: Concurrently Herewith

Art Unit: N/A

For: PICTURE ENCODING METHOD, PICTURE  
DECODING METHOD, PICTURE  
ENCODING APPARATUS, PICTURE  
DECODING APPARATUS, PICTURE  
ENCODING PROGRAM, AND PICTURE  
DECODING PROGRAM

Examiner: Not Yet Assigned

**FIRST PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

MS PCT  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

**INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend the above-identified U.S. patent application as follows:

**Amendments to the Specification** begin on page 2 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 3 of this paper.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 11 of this paper.